

The Land of Broken Promises

By DAN COOLIDGE

Author of "The Fighting Fool," "Hidden Waters," "The Texican," etc.
Illustrations by DON J. LAVIN

(Previously Continued)

"She is mine, and no man shall come between us!"

It would be hard now if the rurales should prove too many for him—if a bullet should check him in his flight and she be left alone. But how to wake her! He tramped near as he led up the unwilling mounts; then, as time pressed, he spoke to her, and at last he knelt at her side.

"Say!" he called, and when that did not serve he laid his hand on her shoulder.

"Wake up!" he said, shaking her gently. "Wake up, it's almost day!" Even as he spoke he went back to the phrase of the cow-camp—where men rise before it is light. But Gracia woke up wondering and stared about her strangely, unable to understand.

"Why—what is it?" she cried. Then, as he stepped back and backed away, she remembered him with a smile.

"Oh," she said, "is it time to get up? Where are we, anyway?"

"About ten miles from Fortuna," answered Hooker soberly. "Too close—we ought to be over that divide."

He pointed ahead to where the valley narrowed and passed between two

gulches, any one of which might give up armed men. Far ahead, like a knife-gash between the ridges, lay the pass to the northern plains, and as their trail swung out into the open they put spurs to their horses and galloped.

Once through that gap, the upper country would lie before them and they could pick and choose. Now they must depend upon speed and the chance that their way was not blocked.

Somewhere in those hills to the east Bernardo Bravo and his men were hidden. Or perhaps they were scattered, turned by their one defeat into roving bandits or vengeful partisans, laying waste the Sonoran ranches as they fought their way back to Chihuahua. There were a hundred evil chances that might befall the fugitives, and while Bud scanned the country ahead Gracia cast anxious glances behind.

"They are coming!" she cried at last, as a moving spot appeared in the rear. "Oh, there they are!"

"Good!" breathed Hooker, as he rose in his stirrups and looked.

"Why, good?" she demanded, curiously.

"They're only three of 'em," answered Bud. "I was afraid they might be in front," he explained, as she gazed at him with a puzzled smile.

"Yes," she said; "but what will you do if they catch us?"

"They won't catch us," replied Hooker confidently. "Not while I've got my rifle. Ah!" he exclaimed, still looking back, "now we know all about it—that sorrel is Manuel del Rey's!"

"And will you kill him?" challenged Gracia, rousing suddenly at the name. Hooker prevented not to hear. Instead, he cocked his eye up at the eastern mountain, whence from time to time came muffled rifle-shots, and turned his horse to go. There was trouble over there to the east somewhere—Alvarez and his Yaquis, still harrying the retreating rebels—and some of it might come their way.

With Del Rey behind them, even though in sight, he was the least of their troubles, and could be easily cared for with a rifle shot if they could not distance him. Hooker knew that the two rurales with him would not continue the pursuit if their leader was out of the way, so that it would not be necessary to injure more than one man.

"Ah, how I hate that man!" raged Gracia, spurring her horse as she scowled back at the galloping Del Rey and his men who were riding onward rapidly.

"All right," observed Bud with a quizzical smile, "I'll have to kill him for you then!"

She gazed at him a moment with eyes that were big with questioning, but the expression on his rugged face baffled her.

"I would not forget it," she cried impulsively. "No, after all I have suffered, I think I could love the man who would meet him face to face! But why do you—ah!" she cried, with a sudden tragic bitterness. "You smile! You have no thought for me—you care nothing that I am afraid of him! Ah, Dios, for a man who is brave—to rid me of this devil!"

"Never mind!" returned Bud, his voice thick with rising anger. "If I kill him it won't be for you!"

He jumped Copper Bottom ahead to avoid her, for in that moment she had touched his pride. Yes, she had done more than that—she had destroyed a dream he had, a dream of a beautiful woman, always gentle, always noble, whom he had sworn to protect with his life. Did she think he was a pelado Mexican, a hot-country lover, to be inflamed by a glance and a smile? Then Phil could have her, and welcome. Her tirade had lessened his burden. Now his fight was but a duty to his partner in the performance of which he would be no less careful, but to turn her over to Phil would not now be painful.

"Ah, Bud!" she appealed, spurring up beside him, "you did not understand! I know you are brave—and if he comes"—she struck her pistol fiercely—"I will kill him myself!"

"Never mind," answered Bud in a kinder voice. "I'll take care of you. Just keep your horse in the trail," he added, as she rode on through the brush, "and I'll take care of Del Rey."

He beckoned her back with a jerk of the head and resumed his place in the lead. Here was no place to talk about men and motives. The mountain above was swarming with rebels, there were rurales spurring behind—yes, even now, far up on the eastern hillside, he could see armed men—and now one was running to intercept them!

He reached for his rifle, jerked up a cartridge, and sat forward in his saddle. He rode warily, watching the distant runner, until suddenly he pulled in his horse and threw up a welcoming hand. The man was Amigo—no other could come down a hill, do so swiftly—and he was signaling him to wait.

"Who is that man?" asked Gracia, as she reined in at his side. "Do you

know him?"

"Sure do!" responded Hooker jovially. "He's the best friend I got in Mexico!"

"Kai, Amigo!" he hailed, as the Yaqui came quartering down the hill, and, apparently oblivious of the oncoming pursuers, he rode out of the trail to meet him. They shook hands and Amigo flashed his familiar smile, glancing shyly over the horse's back at the daughter of the Aragon.

"I knew the horse," he explained, with a gentle caress for Copper Bottom. "My people—up there—kill Mexicans! Where you go?"

"North—to the line," answered Bud, pointing up the pass.

"Muy malo!" frowned the Yaqui, glancing once more at the woman behind. "Muchos revoltosos!"

"Where?" asked Bud.

"Everywhere!" replied Amigo with a comprehensive wave of the hand. "But no matter," he added simply, "I will go with you. Who are these horsemen behind?"

"Rurales!" responded Hooker, and the Yaqui's black eyes dilated.

"Yes," nodded Bud as he read the swift question in their glance. "He is there, too—Del Rey!"

"Que bueno!" exclaimed the Indian, fixing his eagle glance upon the riders. He showed his white teeth in a smile.

In an instant he saw his opportunity, he saw his enemy riding into a trap, and turned his face to the pass.

What Amigo had waited for, the opportunity he had watched for, was at hand. Del Rey should pay the price of that scar the Yaqui carried. Not again would the bullet go astray, and his people should have one less Mexican to fight after that day. The hatred of generations lay behind the thoughts of the Indian. He cared nothing for the grievance of the girl, and he would not kill Del Rey for that, but for his own reasons.

"Come!" he said, laying hold of a latigo strap, and as Hooker loped on up the steady incline he ran along at his stirrup. In his right hand he still carried the heavy Mauser, but his sandaled feet bore him forward with tireless strides and on the heaving of his mighty chest told the story of the pace.

"Let me take your gun," suggested Hooker, as they set off on their race, but Amigo in his warrior's pride only shook his head and motioned him on and on. So at last they gained the rugged summit, where the granite ribs of the mountain crop up through the sands of the wash and the valley slopes away to the north. To the south was Del Rey, still riding after them, but Amigo beckoned Bud beyond the reef and looked out to the north.

"Revoltosos!" he exclaimed, pointing a sun-blackened hand at a distant ridge. "Revoltosos!" he said again, waving his hand to the east. "Here," waving toward the west, "no!"

"Do you know that country?" inquired Hooker, nodding at the great plain with its chains of parallel Sierras, but the Indian shook his head.

"No," he said; "but the best way is straight for that pass."

He pointed at a distant wedge cut down between the blue of two ridges, and scanned the eastern hills intently. "Men!" he cried, suddenly indicating the sky-line of the topmost ridge. "I think they are revoltosos," he added gravely. "They will soon cross your trail."

"No difference," answered Bud with a smile. "I am not afraid—not with you here, Amigo."

"No, but the woman!" suggested Amigo, who read no jest in his words. "It is better that you should ride on—and leave me here."

He smiled encouragingly, but a wild light was creeping into his eyes and Hooker knew what he meant. He desired to be left alone, to deal with Del Rey after the sure manner of the Yaquis. And yet, why not? Hooker gazed thoughtfully at the oncoming rurales and walked swiftly back to Gracia.

"This Indian is a friend of mine," he said, "and I can trust him. He says it will be better for us to ride on—and he will take care of the rurales."

"Take care?" questioned Gracia, turning pale at a peculiar matter-of-fact tone in his voice.

"Sure," said Hooker; "he says there are revoltosos ahead. It will be better for you, he says, to ride on."

"Madre de Dios!" breathed Gracia, clutching at her saddle; and then she nodded her head weakly.

"You better get down for a minute," suggested Hooker, helping her quickly

ly to the ground. "Here, drink some water—you're kinder faint. I'll be right back—just wait to say good-by."

He strode over to where Amigo had posted himself behind a rock and laid a hand on his arm.

"Adios, Amigo!" he said, but the Yaqui only glanced at him strangely.

"Anything in my camp, you're welcome to it," added Hooker, but Amigo did not respond. His black eyes, far-seeing as a hawk's, were fixed intently before him, where Del Rey came galloping in the lead.

"You go now!" he said, speaking with an effort, and Hooker understood. There was no love, no hate left in that mighty carcass—he was all warrior, all Yaqui, and he wanted Del Rey to himself.

"We'll be going," Hooker said to Gracia, retreating swiftly, and his sudden tones made her start. She felt as one feels at a funeral, the hovering wings of death, yet she vaulted into her saddle and left her thoughts un-

Mauser spoke out—one shot! And no more. There was a hush, a long wait, and Amigo rose slowly from behind his rock.

"God!" exclaimed Hooker, as he



The Heavy Mauser Spoke Out—One Shot!

caught the pose, and his voice sounded a requiem for Manuel del Rey.

Then, as Gracia crossed herself and fell to sobbing, he leaned forward in his saddle and they galloped away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Though men may make a jest of it in books, it is a solemn thing to kill a man, even to be near when one is killed. If Gracia had sat in Del Rey herself in a passion her hot blood might have buoyed her up, but now her whole nature was convulsed with the horror of it and she wilted like a flower.

An hour before she had burned with hatred of him, she had wished him dead and sought the man who would kill him. Now that his life had been snuffed off between two heart-beats she remembered him with pity and muttered a prayer for his soul. For Hooker, for De Lancey who had no thought, but only for the dashing young captain who had followed her to his death.

Of this Bud had no knowledge. He realized only that she was growing weaker, and that he must call a halt, and at last, when the walls of their pass had widened and they rode out into the open plain, he turned aside from the trail and drew rein by a clump of mesquite.

"Here, let me take you," he said, as she swayed uncertainly in the saddle. She slid down into his arms and he laid her gently in the shade.

"Poor girl," he muttered. "It's been too much for you. I'll get some water, and pretty soon you can eat."

He unsaddled the canteen from his saddle-flap, gave her a drink, and left her to herself, glancing swiftly along the horizon as he tied out their mounts to graze. But for her faintness he would have pushed on farther, for he had seen men off to the east; but hunger and excitement had told upon her even more than the day-and-night ride.

For a woman, and sitting a side-saddle, she had done better than he had hoped; and yet—well, it was a long way to the border and he doubted if she could make it. She lay still in the shade of the mesquite, just as he had placed her, and when he brought the sack of food she did not raise her head.

"Better eat something," he suggested, spreading out some bread and dried beef. "Here's some oranges. I got from Don Juan—I'll just put them over here for you."

Gracia shuddered, sighing wearily. Then, as if his words had hurt her, she covered her face and wept.

"What did you tell that man?" she asked at last.

"Why—what man?" inquired Hooker, astonished. "Ain't you going to eat?"

"No!" she cried, gazing out at him through her tears, "not until I know what you said. Did you tell that Indian to—kill him?"

She broke down suddenly in a fit of sobbing, and Hooker wiped his brow.

"Why, no!" he protested. "Sure not! What made you think that?"

"Why—you rode over and spoke to him—and he looked at me—and then—he—killed him!"

She gave way to a paroxysm of grief at this, and Bud looked around him, wondering. That she was weak and hungry he knew, but what was this she was saying?

"I reckon I don't understand what you're driving at," he said at last. "What you'd eat something—you'll feel better."

"No, I won't eat!" she declared, sitting up and frowning. "Mr. Hooker, she went on very miserably, 'what did you mean, this morning when you—laughed?' I said I hated poor Manuel—and you said, 'wait what you did—and you laughed.' Did you think—oh, you couldn't have—that I really wanted him killed?"

"Why, sure not!" cried Hooker heartily. "I knowed you was fooling! Didn't I laugh at you? Say, what kind of a feller do you think I am, anyway? I've think I'd get an Indian to do my killing!"

"Oh, then didn't you?" she cried, suddenly brightening up. "You know, you talk so rough sometimes—and I never do know what you mean! You

(To be Continued.)



The Rose For Love— The Card For Death—

Sweet Cupid and Grim Death, in the form of a rose and a playing card, play tag with each other around Alan Law, hero of Louis Joseph Vance's new combination Motion Picture novel.

If you like to read—if you enjoy seeing something really worth while—don't dare miss

The Trey O'Hearts

By Louis Joseph Vance

Author of The Fortune Hunter—The Black Bag—The Lone Wolf—Etc.

Read the Story in

The Intelligencer

See the Pictures

At The Bijou

UNIVERSAL FILM MFG. CO.

Anderson Intelligencer

WIFEY SCORES.

"Why do you feed every tramp who comes along? They never do any work for you?"

"No," said his wife, "but it is quite a satisfaction to me to see a man eat a meal without finding fault with the cooking."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

The Twenty Year Test

"Some twenty years ago I used Chamberlain's Colic, Cholera and Diarrhoea Remedy," writes Geo. W. Brock, publisher of the Easternprise, Aberdeen, Miss. "I discovered that it was a quick and safe cure for diarrhoea. Since then, no one can tell me anything about it just as good." During all these years I have used it and recommended it many times, and it has never disappointed anyone. For sale by all dealers.

Visiting Cards Wedding Invitations Monogram Stationery
FASHIONABLY ENGRAVED
HARCOURT & CO. MANUFACTURING ENGRAVERS
THE ANDERSON INTELLIGENCER
JOB PRINTING DEPARTMENT
EXCLUSIVE LOCAL AGENTS
FOR THIS EXCLUSIVE LINE.